An Essay

on

Disease and its Treatment.

Respectfully submitted to the Faculty

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by

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Disease and its Treatment-

Gentlemen

The subject of my essay is that of Disease and its treatment. and though I may not advance any new ideas yet I shall conform to the rules of the institution I have the honor to be connected with

It has been well said by a medical writer that all men theorise in proportion to their time and abilities. And of all the subjects men have theorised upon I think that of disease has been the most-

superficially examined. and this is preeminantly ~~true~~ true of Old School writers. I do not propose to discuss any of the old and rotton theories of disease. but wish briefly and in an humble manner to present that theory which seems to me most plausible and which I believe ~~I~~ will soon be the accepted theory by the profession.

As we progress in science we are continually discarding old and erroneous ideas and we treasure up knowledge that leads us to sounder and more logical reasoning

I propose briefly to speak of the nature of disease and of its true and scientific treatment. Let us in the first place enquire what is disease in its broadest sense? The answer will be disease is any deviation from the healthy state. This no one will doubt for a moment. But to be a little more concise I will define disease as ~~some~~ abnormal condition of the vital function ~~produced~~ by some material or immaterial cause. I know full well that this definition will meet strong objection at the hands of old school physicians. They commit-

comprehend such a thing as a vital principle. Because they cannot see and feel it they deny its existance They see nothing except that which is gross in its nature they comprehend nothing they can not see

Time forbids that I should enter into any lengthy discussion on the subject of vitality and its connection with disease therefore I will consult brevity in its consideration.

Let us look for a moment at the circulation of the blood and see the influence that vitality has on it. Suppose for argument sake we

we admit that the blood circulates by virtue of the hearts contractions and the heart is stimulated to contract by the presence of the blood. I would enquire what agent was instrumental in producing the first beat of the heart. Surely it was vitality.

I cannot grant that the circulation is maintained wholly by the mechanical force of the hearts contractions. That the blood is forced throughout the minute ramifications of the arterial capilary veinous systems by virtue of the little mechanical force caused by the

muscular fibers of the heart. to me
seems like shallow reasoning. And
when we know that the blood continues
to pulsate after it is drawn from the
artery as long as vitality remains in
it is proof positive to me that vitality
is as necessary to circulation as is
the heart. I once attended the post
mortem examination of a lady who
died suddenly. It was found that
the tissue of the heart was very much
softened and to such an extent
that the walls of the organ could be
easily perforated by the finger and
in many places the walls were very

thin. She died in consequence of a rupture of the heart causing a clot in the pericardium. Now then I am fully convinced that if the circulation is maintained wholly by virtue of the strength and power of contraction of the heart the subject could not have lived for one moment with the tissue of the heart so broken down as it was and no one knows how long had been before her death.

How can it be that grief can affect the tissue so as to produce disease except as it affects the vital principle and who does not know that those

immaterial causes. like grief dis
appointment-anger and many
other immaterial causes are the
occasion of disease in very many
instances. And can it be in this case
that the system is evaded by
impurities which needs to be
purged out of the system by the
forces of modes which the old
school adopt. Are we not therefore
warranted in making the assertion
that as vitality is as necessary
to the healthy play of the functions
its derangement is is disease
I did not intend at the outset to

say much on the theory of disease and although ten times greater argument might be advanced in favor of the theory I write of yet I will dismiss the subject and briefly consider the treatment of disease.

It is well known to all the two dominant schools at present are Allopathy and Homeopathy. Yet the principles of the two systems are as different as light and darkness as sunshine and tempest.

It is well for us therefore to enquire into the merits and demerits of the

two systems and to adopt that which seems to us the most plausible And as it should be the ~~[illegible]~~ object of the physician to lengthen the span of human existence it behoves him therefore as a man clothed with ~~[illegible]~~ the very highest responsibilities to study earnestly and diligently for the true system throwing aside all prejudices and every preconceived opinion

Let us look for a moment at the principles of Homeopathy and see whether they are correct or whether the old system has greater claims

to public confidence. Homeopathy has for its law Similia Similibus curantur or like cures like. In other words we give a remedy having an affinity for the organ diseased and which will produce if administered in massive doses a train of symptoms the like of those found in the disease. And this is Homeopathy. and Homeopathy is nothing more or less and though this is the great fundamental law the system differs widely in many minor respects from the old school. For instance. We prove all our remedies on the healthy

and in that way ascertain the exact nature and apropriate sphere of each remedy and the diseases for which it is aplicable. And again knowing that the organs are more susceptible to the action of drugs in a diseased than in a healthy state we give much less medicine than the old school volumes might be written on the efficacy of infinitesimal doses. but I must content myself with a brief notice of the subject in this connection. Let me refer you to the workings of miasmata which

is daily producing the most dreaded diseases and are yearly consigning thousands to their long home.
And yet this potent agent is but imperceptibly small particles floating in the atmosphere which cannot be detected by the nicest chemical test. Who can deny the efficacy of "small doses" in this case. Sir Astly Cooper says that the quantity of mercury which finds its way to the milk of the mother is sufficient to cure disease in her nursing child. Our remedies are prepared in such a way that their

greatest medicinal power is developed and they act directly on the part diseased. Moreover we give but one remedy at a time and that strictly in accordance with the law of Homeopathy

We do not repeat the dose if there is improvement till the one given has spent its power.

These last I say are the minor points connected with Homeopathy

I propose now to discuss briefly the law of Homeopathy. Is it scientific to give remedies according to the law of similitude. Let us enquire and

see if all cures are not made upon
that principle. Quinia is the great
remedy for intermittent fever used
by the old school and it was with
this remedy Hahnemann was
experimenting when he accidentally
discovered the correct law of admin
istering remedies. Though quinia
will cause a disease like intermitt
ent fever yet it is one of the greatest
in its cure. I cannot refrain in
this connection quoting from Watsons
practice which is the highest
old School authority. He says
Strychnia has been suggested

as a remedy for severe tetanus. not in infinitesimal doses as Hahnemann would suppose perscribe it. but in sufficient quantity to produce a sensible effect. The principle upon which this has been recommended is the same with that on which the nitrate of silver ointment is applied to the inflamed conjunctiva in purulent ophthalmia. We know that Strychnia acts upon the spinal cord affecting apparently those parts and those functions of the cord which are affected in tetanus. and in such a fatal malady as tetanus

it would be justifiable I conceive to give Strychnia in the hope that it might occasion a morbid action which would supercede the the morbid action of the disease and be less perilous and more manageable than it. But it would be right to try such a remedy as this in the first instance on one of the lower animals. This were it successful would be a cure according to the Hahnemanian doctrine. Similia Similibus Curantur a doctrine however much older than Hahnemann" Very good Watson

you have recomended a remedy
and at the same time admit that
it would cure on the Homeopathic
principle. If Dr Watson will attack
the disease and not the patient
in other words if you will recomend
Strychnia in doses that will not
produce a sensible effect on the
patient but rather a sensible
effect on the disease we will
call you a better Homeopath
The reader will see that this is
virtually an acknowlegement by
good old school authority of the
validity of our grand law of cure

But to take an example that comes under the observation of every one. When one burns a hand is it scientific treatment to plaice the hand in cold water. Every one will answer no. But to do as would be in accordence with the doctrine of Allopathy. and would strictly accord with the principles of Contraria Contrariis. And if one should burse a limb shall we treat it Allopathically by plarcing it near the fire or shall we treat it Homeop-athically by keping it from the fire and rubbing it with snow or ice

No one hesitates to answer.

Do we not then see in the few illustrations I have given that one thing is certain if there is a law to guide us in the administration of remedies it is the law of Homeopathy and can we think for a moment that in the dread hour of sickness when all around is dark and gloomy God has left us to the mercies of blind chance. No such cannot be the case. There is a law to guide us as we administer to the wants of the sick It is the law of Homeopathy a law of natures God. immutable. Eternal.